

# GAYNOR NAMES LIST OF 16 HELPFUL BOOKS

**Begins with the Bible, and Says  
They Had Largest Effect on His  
Life in the Order Named.**

**HE QUOTES SANCHO PANZA**

**It Were Well if All Could Say: "Naked  
Came I Into This Government and  
Naked Come I Out of It."**

## BOOKS THAT HAVE HELPED MAYOR GAYNOR.

The Bible.  
Euclid.  
Shakespeare.  
Hume's History of England (especially the notes.)  
Homer.  
Milton.  
Cervantes.  
Rabelais.  
Gil Blas.  
Franklin's Autobiography and Letters.  
Plutarch's Lives.  
The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini.  
Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.  
Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations.  
Bacon's Essays.  
De Lome's British Constitution.

Here are the sixteen books which Mayor Gaynor believes have had the largest effect on his life. They are mentioned in the order in which the Mayor thinks he has been affected by them. The list does not include certain works on what Mayor Gaynor calls the "philosophy of history" and from which he has also derived great satisfaction. The Mayor says, however, that if he had taken more time some other books might have been included in the list.

This list is contained in a letter which the Mayor wrote to R. A. C. Smith, member of the Chamber of Commerce and Harbor and Pier Commissioner, some time ago. There is a story in the way Mayor Gaynor happened to write the letter.

A few months ago Gov. Dix appointed Mr. Smith on the New York State Harbor Commission, which is considering the economy of space in New York Harbor, the length of piers, &c. Mr. Smith already had been officially connected with other of this city's river and harbor projects. Dock Commissioner Calvin Tompkins and State Engineer John A. Bensen were the other members of the commission. Mr. Smith was Chairman, and as Chairman he last November accompanied Mayor Gaynor to Washington and Richmond, where the Mayor was to make addresses at certain waterway conventions.

In the parlor car on the way back from Richmond the Mayor and Mr. Smith fell into a book talk. Mr. Smith mentioned the "Don Quixote" of Cervantes, and described the enjoyment he had found in reading it in the original Spanish. Mr. Smith found that Mayor Gaynor was just as great an admirer of Cervantes as he was, and the Mayor confessed frankly that his inability to read "Don Quixote" in the original Spanish was one of the great regrets of his life.

Mr. Smith enjoyed the conversation so much that as soon as he returned to this city he bought the handsomest edition of "Don Quixote" in the Motteux translation he could find and sent it to the Mayor.

### The Mayor's Letter and His List.

Here is the letter which the Mayor wrote to Mr. Smith in reply and which, besides thanking Mr. Smith for the present, contains a list of the Mayor's sixteen most helpful books:

Dec. 4, 1911.

Dear Mr. Smith: I thank you exceedingly for the edition of "Don Quixote" which you send me. The illustrations by Doré are grand. The translation, I notice, is by Motteux. Of the four English translations extant I deem that by Jarvis the best. It is so deft and nimble. I imagine that it approaches the spirit of the original more nearly than any of the others.

When a younger man, I often entertained the intention of trying to learn Spanish, in order to read "Don Quixote" in the original. I envy your being able to do so. In translating a work of imagination it is almost always necessary to depart from literalness in order to give the genius and spirit. This Jarvis does, while Motteux is often painfully literal.

And yet his literalness brings out some things that should not be lost. For instance, in the account of Don Quixote's manner of living and what dishes he ate each day of the week, Jarvis says, "an omelet on Saturdays," which is certainly commonplace enough, but Motteux gives the original exactly, namely, "griefs and groans on Saturdays," which was some kind of a mixed dish which evidently caused bellyache, or something like it.

But cases like that are few, and the nimble and light touches of Jarvis, which let you right into the spirit of the narrative, are often departures from the literal rendering of the original.

At best a translation of a work of imagination bears about the same resemblance to the original as the reverse side of a tapestry does to the true side. That is why I am sorry I do not understand Spanish as you do. If I did we could continue that discussion of the writings of Cervantes which we commenced on the train on our way up from Richmond.

### Compares Motteux With Jarvis.

Let me cite a passage or two to show how much more attractive the translation of Jarvis is. After Don Quixote is knocked down by the sail of the windmill, Sancho Panza comes running up on Dapple and says, according to Motteux:

"Mercy on me, did not I give you worship fair warning? Did not I tell you they were windmills, and that nobody could think otherwise unless he

also had windmills in his head?"

But Jarvis more nimbly says: "'God save us,' quoth Sancho Panza, 'did not I warn you to have a care of what you did, for that they were nothing but windmills, and nobody could mistake them but one that had the like in his head?'"

And again, speaking of the company at

Antonio's house who were entertaining Don Quixote, Motteux says:

"Among others were two ladies of an airy and waggish disposition."

Contrast this with the way Jarvis puts it:

"Among the ladies there were two of an arch and jocose disposition."

But I must not multiply these instances, except to quote the rendering of a proverb. Motteux makes Don Quixote say to Sancho: "I have always heard it said that to do a kindness to clowns is like throwing water into the sea." Jarvis has it that "to do good to the vulgar is to throw water into the sea."

Cervantes and Shakespeare died on the same day—or rather, one died ten days later than the other, according to the modern reckoning of time, but I do not remember which. But I find they made use of the same expression. Sancho Panza is made to say: "There is some difference between a hawk and a hand-saw." Shakespeare says in "Hamlet": "I know a hawk from a handsaw."

Years ago I copied every proverb, or philosophical or wise saying, there is in Don Quixote. I think that an equal number of good ones is not found in any book, except the Bible. I am half tempted to quote a few to you and let you compare them with the original.

### Aptly Quotes Sancho Panza.

"Who but a madman would mind what a madman says," is one. "Diligence is the mother of good fortune," is another. And this: "It is pleasant to govern, though it be but a flock of sheep." And this: "Some people go out for wool, and come home shorn." And this: "Letters without virtue, are pearls upon a dunghill." And this: "Though habit and example do much, good sense is the foundation of good language." And this: "When they give you a heifer, be ready with the rope." And this of the same meaning: "When good fortune knocks, make haste to let her in."

And some or all of those elected to office might well say with Sancho Panza when his old clothes were being taken off and he was being dressed up in his official garments, when he was entering upon the government of his island:

"Clothe me as you will, I shall be Sancho Panza still."

And it were well if they could all say, as Sancho did when he gave up his Governorship and they had stripped him of his official garments to reclothe him with his old ones:

"Naked came I into this Government and naked come I out of it."

And let me wind up with this one which the ladies might take offense at:

"Between the yes and the no of a woman I would not undertake to thrust the point of a needle."

And while I am at it, and since we went into this book talk on the train at

all, I will set down for you the books which I think have had the largest effect on my life. I will give them in the order in which I think I was affected by them:

The Bible.  
Euclid.  
Shakespeare.  
Hume's History of England (especially the notes.)  
Homer.  
Milton.  
Cervantes.  
Rabelais.  
Gil Blas.  
Franklin's Autobiography and Letters.  
Plutarch's Lives.  
The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini.  
Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.  
Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations.  
Bacon's Essays.  
De Lome's British Constitution.

I have left out of this list those works on what, for want of a better name, I may call the philosophy of history. I have derived immense satisfaction from them. And no doubt I have omitted some books I would mention if I took the time. Very truly yours,  
W. J. GAYNOR.

R. A. C. Smith, Esq.,  
100 Broadway, New York City.

### GAYNOR ADVISES GRADUATES.

**Urges Them to Get the Reading Habit  
and to Become Farmers or Soldiers.**

Mayor Gaynor attended the graduating exercises of Public School 100, at Rivington and Suffolk Streets, yesterday morning, and among other things advised the young graduates what to read. The pupils cheered the Mayor heartily. He said:

"I was pleased when your Principal read from the Scriptures. He read the proverb, 'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches; and loving favor rather than silver and gold.' I hope that you all go out of here with that burned in your minds.

"There are people in this city now with untold riches, but who are without any great name. There are not many, but there are some, and they are not happy. They would give great riches for happiness.

"I hope while here you have acquired the study habit, the reading habit, the habit of reading good books. When you get that habit you are happy. When alone, get a good book and read. That is a good habit. Don't get the habit of reading trashy newspapers. It is like reading dime novels.

"I hope you have acquired the reading habit, for there is a reason. If it is a regular habit and you read serious books, you will come out ahead of all competitors. I desire to say that to start you in that direction I will give each one of you a copy of the autobiography of Benjamin Franklin. I will send them to you.

"I advise you to get the Book of Proverbs, and read them all. Copy some of them in a little book and carry it with you. Memorize them. When you get them you will get the habit.

"Then 'Plutarch's Lives.' Read that. The language is simple and will do you much good. After Plutarch keep up reading. The 'Short History of English People' is good. Read it line by line. It is no use to skim over books. Keep your mind settled. Some books shouldn't be read at all. Remember the saying, 'My mind to me a kingdom is.' As soon as you get the habit you are on the road to success.

"Some of you will go from here to the High Schools. The High Schools of this city teach more than Dartmouth did when Daniel Webster went there. Some will go to the City College, where you will get a better education than Webster and many other great men got. But they kept on reading; they had the study habit.

"Some of you should go to an agricultural college. Go out and hire yourself to farmers, no matter how small the monthly wage. Learn it all. Then study and make money as farmers. It is the best opening that I know of. It is healthful work. Would you rather be perched on a stool or selling calico than a free man on a farm? Which is better?

"I would advise you all when you become the right age to join the National Guard or go into the army. The military exercise is good; it will strengthen your body."